

The most recent National Climate Assessment, conducted by leading scientists from the research community and across the Federal Government, found that the number of acres burned in the Western United States is double what would have burned without climate change.

My home State of California knows this all too well as it is the epicenter of this destructive phenomenon. The top three worst wildfire seasons in California were all in the last 5 years, including the largest single wildfire in California history in 2021. Since 2017, wildfires have burned more than 11 million acres, killed nearly 200 people, and destroyed more than 32,000 homes.

Worryingly, these wildfires are predicted to only grow worse as climate conditions continue to change, and the Federal Government has not yet adequately responded. Important investments in wildfire resilience were included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, which were enacted in the last Congress, but stakeholders are nearly unanimous in supporting additional policy changes to improve the pace and scale of wildfire resiliency treatments.

At the same time, the urgency of this crisis should not prompt Congress to vitiate important environmental safeguards. Throughout my time in the Senate, I have consistently championed the preservation and careful stewardship of our treasured forests, and this bill will be no different.

Our Wildfire Emergency Act is the result of a considered approach to the wildfire crisis and includes feedback from conservationists, public and private stakeholders, and the U.S. Forest Service.

First, it would provide the U.S. Forest Service with a pilot authority to leverage private financing options to increase the pace and scale of forest restoration projects. These projects would involve a collaborative approach to forest management to ensure that the forests are protected.

This conservation finance model would be a new way of implementing forest restoration work, but the principle at its core is that forests are vital to a healthy environment and populace. Forests provide shade and wind breaks, stabilize steep mountain slopes, and help purify our water. These benefits have tangible value, and the financing model we develop here would make those benefits plain for all to see.

In addition, the bill makes energy resilience a priority across the Federal Government. It would help develop and fund backup power for critical infrastructure like drinking water or hospitals, and put a renewed focus on wildfire detection and monitoring. As vulnerable as our forests are, it takes just one spark to ignite an entire mountain. The sooner our firefighters can detect and respond to these fires, the better our chances of preventing more communities from devastation.

In addition, the bill would provide grants to low-income households to make fire-resilient upgrades to their homes. Thanks to home insurance regulatory changes taking place in California, wildfire retrofits could also help lower insurance premiums and reduce the financial burden on rural homeowners. The bill would also make grants available to low-income communities to help involve them in planning and implementing forest restoration projects on the lands surrounding their homes.

Lastly, our bill recognizes that the forest management workforce is also in crisis. The U.S. Forest Service and Department of Interior have experience chronic staffing shortages in wildland firefighters for years. And even though the bipartisan infrastructure law and Inflation Reduction Act provided historic levels of funding for forest conservation work, the Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts an overall decline in the forest conservation workforce in the next 10 years.

To address these issues, our bill would create new funding sources for forest management education and firefighter training. It would also establish a prescribed fire training center in the Western United States, to train the next generation of firefighters and forestry technicians in the landscapes where their skills are most needed.

The simple reality is that wildfires will continue to happen in the West. They are an integral part of the West's ecology, even if climate change has exacerbated their scale and intensity. Our job must be to prepare for these wildfires to the extent we are able, to use the best available science to make our forests more resilient, and ensure that our communities remain safe.

That is why Senators PADILLA, DAINES, WYDEN, and I have introduced this bill today, and I urge my colleagues to support and pass it as soon as possible.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

**SENATE RESOLUTION 20—CONDEMNING THE COUP THAT TOOK PLACE ON FEBRUARY 1, 2021, IN BURMA AND THE BURMESE MILITARY'S DETENTION OF CIVILIAN LEADERS, CALLING FOR AN IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL THOSE DETAINED, PROMOTING ACCOUNTABILITY AND JUSTICE FOR THOSE KILLED BY THE BURMESE MILITARY, AND CALLING FOR THOSE ELECTED TO SERVE IN PARLIAMENT TO RESUME THEIR DUTIES WITHOUT IMPEDIMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. MERKLEY, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 20

Whereas, on February 1, 2021, the Burmese military and its aligned Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) conducted a coup against the civilian government hours before Parliament was to convene in a new session, resulting in the military junta illegally detaining State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, President Win Myint, and members of Parliament, as well as pro-democracy activists from the 88 Generation and other civil society leaders;

Whereas, since February 1, 2021, the Burmese military has detained more than 13,000 people for exercising their rights of freedom of speech and assembly and killed more than 2,800 civilians, including children;

Whereas the Burmese military put the democratically elected civilian leadership of Burma, including President Win Myint and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, through sham trials for fabricated crimes and sentenced them to lengthy prison terms in order to remove them from political competition;

Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi was sentenced to 33 years in prison for multiple spurious charges;

Whereas the Burmese military has become the world's second largest detainer of journalists, with over 100 journalists imprisoned since the coup;

Whereas the Burmese military's actions have driven hundreds of thousands from their homes and driven thousands to flee across Burma's borders into Thailand, India, and Bangladesh;

Whereas fighting between the Burmese military and several ethnic armed groups continues, with government forces committing increasingly violent abuses against ethnic Karen, Kayah, Kachin, Chin, Rakhine, Shan, and Rohingya minority populations;

Whereas the Burmese military restricted freedom of movement, telecommunications, and the media, limiting access to information to and from Burma during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated the political crisis initiated by the February 1, 2021 coup;

Whereas senior generals of the Burmese military have been sanctioned by the United States Government for serious human rights abuses and for their role in the coup and are subject to ongoing investigations into their conduct by the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice;

Whereas, on January 28, 2021, the Union Election Commission rejected allegations by the Burmese military that fraud played a significant role in determining the outcome of the November 2020 elections;

Whereas Burma's November 2020 elections resulted in the National League for Democracy party securing enough seats in Parliament to form the next government;

Whereas Burmese military general Min Aung Hlaing has announced his intentions for Burmese parliamentary elections to be held by August 1, 2023;

Whereas, without full participation from relevant political forces in the country, including civil society groups and opposition parties, and without a robust presence of credible international observers, the results of any parliamentary election run by the military regime will not gain widespread acceptance, domestically or internationally;

Whereas, in July 2022, the Burmese military executed four male activists accused of aiding insurgents to fight Burma's army following secret trials;

Whereas, in response to the Civil Disobedience Movement's opposition protests, the Burmese military has used live fire, water cannons, and rubber bullets against peace protesters;

Whereas, in December 2021, violent reprisals against peaceful protests resulted in the

torture and subsequent deaths of over 40 civilians in Sagaing;

Whereas the Burmese military has a long history of committing atrocities against the people of Burma, including the targeting of specific ethnic groups;

Whereas, as of October 2022, over 943,000 stateless Rohingya refugees reside in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas, Bangladesh, the vast majority of whom live in 34 extremely congested camps;

Whereas, on March 21, 2022, the United States Secretary of State formally determined that members of the Burmese military committed genocide and crimes against humanity against Rohingya in 2016 and 2017;

Whereas the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN member states continue to play an important role in addressing the crisis in Burma, including through the provision of humanitarian assistance in Burma and by preventing junta leadership from participating in ASEAN meetings, absent progress on the 5 Point Consensus;

Whereas United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar Thomas H. Andrews and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer continue to provide ongoing reporting and analysis of the dire and deteriorating situation for the men, women, and children of Burma, inside the country and as refugees, including through presentations to the United Nations Human Rights Council and the United Nations General Assembly, and through reports that document the illegitimacy of the Burmese junta and urge member states to engage in coordinated sanctions and weapon embargos against the junta;

Whereas the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar continues to collect, consolidate, preserve, and analyze evidence of serious international crimes and violations of international law committed in Myanmar since 2011, and helps to facilitate and expedite fair and independent criminal proceedings; and

Whereas, in December 2022, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 2669 on Burma, the first resolution on Burma since the country was admitted as a member state in 1948, calling for the immediate end to all forms of violence and urging restraint and the release of all prisoners: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the people of Burma in their quest for democracy, sustainable peace, and genuine ethnic and religious reconciliation, and the realization of internationally recognized human rights for all, including for ethnic and religious groups whose human rights have been violated repeatedly and who have been disenfranchised historically;

(2) calls on the Burmese military to—

(A) immediately and unconditionally release all political prisoners detained as a result of the coup on February 1, 2021;

(B) immediately restore all forms of communication, including access to the internet without surveillance;

(C) immediately end the use of violence and allow for a legal process for accountability and justice for those unlawfully detained, injured, and killed by the Burmese military;

(D) remove all impediments to free travel that have been imposed as a result of the coup;

(E) return to power all members of the civilian government elected in the November 8, 2020 elections and allow them to fulfill their mandate without impediment;

(F) allow for freedom of expression, including the right to protest, peaceful assembly,

press freedom, and freedom of movement; and

(G) allow unfettered reporting from local, national, and international media;

(3) calls on social media companies to suspend the accounts of the Union Solidarity and Development Party and the Burmese military that have used their platforms to spread disinformation, fear, and threats of violence;

(4) supports the use of all diplomatic, economic, and development tools to ensure that vulnerable groups, including ethnic and religious groups, as well as all children, youth, and teachers in educational settings are safe, and schools and universities are not targeted for attacks or use by the Burmese military;

(5) expresses grave concern for the safety and security of the more than 1,000,000 internally displaced persons (referred to in this resolution as “IDPs”) and refugees who have been displaced by the Burmese military and now face challenging conditions in camps;

(6) expresses grave concern for the 17,600,000 people of Burma who are in need of humanitarian aid, including the 1,500,000 IDPs in Burma, of which some 165,000 remain in the southeast, adding to those already displaced in Rakhine, Chin, Shan, and Kachin states;

(7) appreciates the generosity of Burma’s neighboring countries, including Thailand, India, and Bangladesh, and encourages them to meaningfully assist refugees who have fled and continue to flee the Burmese military, including through the delivery of cross-border humanitarian assistance and with recognition of the protracted nature of the conflict; and

(8) calls on the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense to fully implement section 7008 of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2021 (division K of Public Law 116-260), the BURMA Act of 2022 (subtitle E of title LV of division E of Public Law 117-263), and any similar or successor law governing United States foreign assistance following a coup, and to immediately—

(A) impose targeted restrictions aimed at the Burmese military, military-owned or -controlled enterprises, and those responsible for the February 1, 2021 coup;

(B) work with the international community, including at the United Nations Security Council, with United States’ allies in the region, and with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, to condemn the coup, delegitimize the junta and any military-run elections announced by the junta, and take steps to ensure that international economic engagement in Burma does not contribute to human rights abuses or benefit individuals connected to the coup;

(C) support conditionality on diplomatic, economic, and security relations with Burma, including using the voice and vote of the United States at multilateral development institutions, until all those detained in the February 1, 2021 coup are released and there has been a full restoration of the civilian-controlled parliament reflecting the November 8, 2020 election results;

(D) utilize the United States Government’s position on the United Nations Security Council to bring about greater international cooperation in the pursuit of justice and accountability in Burma;

(E) empower and provide assistance to the National Unity Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the National Unity Consultative Council, the Civil Disobedience Movement in Myanmar, and other entities promoting democracy in Burma through nonviolent efforts, including channeling aid through local civil society organizations along the Thai and Indian borders that are not controlled by the junta, while

simultaneously denying legitimacy and resources to the junta;

(F) promote national reconciliation among the diverse ethnic and religious groups in Burma;

(G) counter support to the junta by the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation and other supporters of the military regime; and

(H) secure the restoration of democracy, the establishment of an inclusive and representative civilian government and a reformed military reflecting the diversity of Burma and under civilian control, and the enactment of constitutional, political, and economic reform in Burma.

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise today, on the eve of the second anniversary of the military coup in Burma, to introduce a resolution marking the occasion—and the terrible 2 years that the people of Burma have had to suffer since then. I am proud to introduce this resolution today alongside my colleagues Senators YOUNG, MERKLEY, and COLLINS.

The resolution condemns the illegitimate Burmese military coup and calls for an immediate return to democratic governance grounded in respect for civil liberties. Demonstrating our support for the Burmese people is more important than ever, as the human rights situation in Burma threatens to deteriorate even further.

Tomorrow marks 2 years since the Burmese military overthrew the democratically elected Government in Burma, on the eve of what was to have been the convening of the Parliament that was elected on November 8, 2020, and installed a repressive, authoritarian regime.

Since February 1, 2021, the Burmese military has reversed years of uneven but generally positive democratic reform. The military has engaged in mass atrocities, including by detaining over 13,000 people for exercising basic freedoms and killing over 2,800 civilians, including children. Today, over 17 million people in Burma are in need of humanitarian aid, and 1.5 million people remain internally displaced due to the ongoing violence and instability fostered by the military.

I would note that it is the same military officers now running the country who were implicated in the genocide waged against the Rohingya people, an assault that was recognized by the Secretary of State on March 21, 2022, only the eighth such determination since the Holocaust. The Burmese military continues to systemically target its most vulnerable people, including women, children, and ethnic and religious minorities. The junta also continues to silence activists and opposition parties, most recently illustrated by the 33-year prison sentence handed down to State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi after a series of sham trials.

Today, we honor those lives we have lost due to the junta’s violent repression and calls upon the Burmese military to end its senseless killing of its own people.

The U.S. Senate fully stands behind those peacefully protesting for their

rights to freedom of speech, assembly, and the press. We also remain committed to free and fair elections in Burma and the peaceful and expedient transition to a civilian-led government. The United States and the international community must hold accountable human rights violators for their actions. This resolution calls on the President to impose targeted sanctions and restrictions on those responsible for the February 2021 coup and human rights abuses in Burma, including through the bipartisan BURMA Act of 2022, which I was proud to have led, and which was enacted as part of the NDAA in December.

While the February 2021 coup represents a major step backwards, the United States remains steadfast in support of a free and prosperous future for Burma. This resolution, which I am proud to introduce today, will reaffirm the United States' solidarity with the Burmese people in their quest for sustainable peace and democracy.

I would invite my colleagues to co-sponsor the resolution, and I look forward to early action in the Foreign Relations Committee and by the full Senate.

#### AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I have one request for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, January 31, 2023, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed roundtable.

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2023

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, February 1; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly Democratic caucus meeting.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, rollcall votes are expected during Wednesday's session.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:52 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### THE JUDICIARY

AMANDA K. BRAILSFORD, OF IDAHO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF IDAHO, VICE B. LYNN WINMILL, RETIRED.

JEFFREY IRVINE CUMMINGS, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, VICE AN ADDITIONAL POSITION IN ACCORDANCE WITH 28 U.S.C. 133(B)(1).

MICHAEL ARTHUR DELANEY, OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT, VICE JEFFREY R. HOWARD, RETIRED.

LASHONDA A. HUNT, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, VICE CHARLES R. NORGLE, SR., RETIRED.

##### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be brigadier general*

COL. SEAN M. CARPENTER  
COL. MARY K. HADDAD  
COL. JAMES L. HARTLE  
COL. AARON J. HEICK  
COL. JOSEPH D. JANIK  
COL. MICHAEL T. MCGINLEY  
COL. KEVIN J. MERRILL  
COL. TARA E. NOLAN  
COL. RODERICK C. OWENS  
COL. MARK D. RICHEY  
COL. NORMAN B. SHAW, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be brigadier general*

COL. KRISTIN A. HILLERY  
COL. MICHELLE L. WAGNER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be major general*

BRIG. GEN. ELIZABETH E. ARLEDGE  
BRIG. GEN. ROBERT M. BLAKE  
BRIG. GEN. VANESSA J. DORNHOEFER  
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER A. FREEMAN  
BRIG. GEN. DAVID P. GARFIELD  
BRIG. GEN. MITCHELL A. HANSON  
BRIG. GEN. JODY A. MERRITT  
BRIG. GEN. ADRIAN K. WHITE  
BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM W. WHITTENBERGER, JR.  
BRIG. GEN. CHRISTOPHER F. YANCY